

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
PRIVILEGES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST.HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 3rd DECEMBER 2018**

Question

Given that the ComRes report ‘Voter Engagement Research for States of Jersey’ indicated that the top reason for not voting given by almost one in four non-voters was an inability to get to a polling station, what measures, if any, will the Chairman propose for the next elections in 2022 –

- (a) to increase the number and accessibility of polling stations;
- (b) to increase the number of pre-poll stations and the opening hours of those stations; and
- (c) to ensure that some form of e-voting system has been tested and is in place?

Answer

The ComRes survey findings concur with my previously recorded views as expressed to the Assembly in June of this year -

Hansard 08/06/2018

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS

1.Chairman, Privileges and Procedures Committee

Deputy R. Labey:

“...It is ridiculous to me that some of our polling stations in St. Helier are in the most difficult places to park your car and get to the polling station. We would be better off having a polling station at B&Q. I think we have got to move forward with technology to help us to do that. We are losing votes because people have not been able to get to their polling station, they might be working or what have you, or it might just be inconvenient, so we have got to try to go to them with polling stations in perhaps less traditional and more convenient places...any polling station should be able to take your vote.”

For comprehensive detail pertinent to the issues raised in the Deputy’s question I refer him to my answer to Written Question 138/2018 (tabled on 11th September 2018). In my answer I explain that a central, automatic, electronic register of eligible voters is key to pushing forward the initiatives the Deputy lists in parts (a) (b) and (c) of his question. We are told this ‘People Directory’ will launch early in 2019. PPC awaits delivery of this initiative which is the responsibility of the Government of which the Deputy is a part.

We can’t wait forever.

PPC is poised to action increasing the number and accessibility of polling stations, this will be easier with a fully operational ‘People Directory’. We have set a target date of autumn 2019 for the Government’s ‘People Directory’ to come to fruition, failing which we will still strive to initiate reform in all the areas identified by the Deputy in his question, primarily through amendments to the Public Elections Law, but it will be far more challenging.